
Consultation on Proposal for a draft Education
(Northern Ireland) Order

RESPONSE BOOKLET

December 2005

**Responses will not be accepted after
TUESDAY, 7 MARCH 2006**

Please note that to ensure that your comments are taken into account you **MUST** fully complete **SECTIONS 1 and 2** if you are making an individual response, or **SECTIONS 1 and 3** if you are responding on behalf of an organisation.

It is important that you write clearly and legibly. We would ask you to use black pen and **BLOCK CAPITALS** at all times.

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SECTION 1

Name of Organisation: Newtownabbey Borough Council

CONSULTATION ON PROPOSAL FOR A DRAFT EDUCATION (NORTHERN IRELAND) ORDER

RESPONSE DOCUMENT

Response to Articles 3 to 13

Religious Education should be taught by "Specialist" Teachers and should not be mandatory.

A European Language should be available, but not compulsory for KS3 pupils who have not achieved Level 4 in English/Literary.

Extra time and resources should be available to develop such pupils to a minimum level of literacy, particularly in reading, writing and spelling.

Response to Articles 14 to 17

Special Education provision for statemented children will require additional resources if they are to be educated in mainstream schools.

The number of statemented pupils should be limited in a class/school to 2-3% and resources used should not be detrimental to other pupils.

The resources allocated for statemented children should go with the pupil and should not be taken from the school budget.

Response to Article 23

Support 23.2(d) – this could result in shared expertise between Boards, leading to increased efficiency and maximising limited resources.

Curriculum changes mean that teachers require training and appropriate resources to deliver the curriculum. It is important that the Department provides sufficient resources to enable CASS to deliver the training and support. Finance to cover staff who are being trained, ie attending a course, etc, should not come from the existing school budget.

Response to Article 24

The Council welcomes the openness and transparency. Courses of Study could enable parents to make informed choices and select the appropriate school for their child.

Results/Educational achievements:

This enables the efficiency of schools to be assessed. However, the Council recommends that results are published as actual number of pupils, not as a percentage, as the latter can give a distorted figure.

It also recommends that the results from all examination Boards, not just NI Boards, are published.

Response to Articles 27 to 29

The Council has concerns about the whole area of Admissions Criteria, which needs further research.

Some criteria is discriminatory, be it geographical, academical, social or economic.

29.4 – Cannot comment until the Department defines “exceptional circumstances”. This is open to interpretation and possible abuse by schools/parents.

The constitution of a body to determine applications could be seen as just another Quango.

Response to Articles 30 to 33

The Council supports Board approval for expulsions.

There must be increased resources from the Department to Boards to promote suitable education to excluded/expelled pupils.

In view of the increased numbers of excluded pupils, particularly for behavioural and drug related problems, special resources should be:

- (a) given to schools to deal with difficult pupils
- (b) used to provide resources/staff at Educational Guidance Centres
- (c) used to finance innovative schemes, eg mentoring, buddy schemes. This is especially important in Years 11 & 12.

Response to Articles 34 to 36

The Council would be concerned as to who assesses “serious professional incompetence”.

This should be done by an Inspectorate and only after advice and support from CASS, in consultation with Teacher’s Unions.

Response to Articles 37 and 38

The Council feels that this may be another Quango. The Further Education Governing Bodies should include elected representatives.

The Council also points out that if there is payment for Further Education Boards, why not for School Boards of Governors?

Response to Article 39

Yearly assessment does indicate which schools are best at raising standards, however it does place a greater burden on teachers, though more paperwork, etc.

A newer form of individual assessment and greater use of IT should be considered.

Response to Article 40

The Council supports this, as few attend anyway.

Response to Article 41

Work related courses for KS4 pupils should not incur a charge in rural areas.